

Via Facsimile: (703) 872-9306

9D-HR-19788
PATENT

Remarks

The Office Action mailed January 28, 2004 has been carefully reviewed and the foregoing amendment has been made in consequence thereof.

Claims 1-20 are now pending in this application. Claims 8-13 have been allowed. Claims 1, 14, and 20 stand rejected. Claims 2-7 and 15-19 stand objected to. Claims 2 and 15 are newly independent. An additional fee is due for newly independent Claims 2 and 15.

A fee calculation sheet for the newly independent claims along with authorization to charge a deposit account in the amount of the calculated fee are submitted herewith.

The undersigned wishes to express his appreciation to the Examiner for the courtesies that he extended during a telephone interview that occurred on February 23, 2004. The Examiner discussed the option of adding some structure from the Figures into Claims 1 and 14. The undersigned agreed.

The rejection of Claims 1, 14, and 20 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Ott et al. ("Ott") (US 4,851,662) is respectfully traversed.

Ott describes a side-by-side refrigerator (10) that includes a fresh food door (12) and a frozen foods door (14). The frozen food door includes a recess (18) wherein a through-the-door dispenser (16) for ice and water is positioned. The recess includes a photo cell (24) that is mounted on a bracket (26) and an operator actuatable toggle switch (28) and a light bulb (30) mounted on a partition (32). The photo cell is positioned to sense the ambient room light. A control circuit for the light bulb includes a parallel ice dispensing switch (36) and a water dispensing switch (38) which are connected in series with the light bulb. When either ice or water is dispensed, the recess is illuminated as long as the respective actuator lever arms (20, 22) are depressed. A photosensitive switch (40) is connected in parallel the toggle switch, the light bulb, and an AC power source, such that the photosensitive switch operates as an automatic night light when the toggle switch is closed thereby turning the light bulb automatically on at night. Notably, neither the control circuit nor the photosensitive switch operate to fade-out the light bulb, rather they are configured to actuate the light bulb on or off.

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Claim 1 recites "a refrigerator comprising a fresh food section and a freezer section, at least one of said fresh food section and freezer section comprising a door comprising an external surface and an internal surface, and a light mounted to said external surface, said light electrically coupled to a processor-free light fade-out circuit, wherein said processor-free light fade-out circuit comprises a pulse width modulation fade-out circuit."

Ott does not describe or suggest a refrigerator including a fresh food section and a freezer section, wherein the at least one of fresh food section and freezer section include a door that includes an external surface and an internal surface, and a light mounted to the external surface, and wherein the light is electrically coupled to a processor-free light fade-out circuit, wherein the processor-free light fade-out circuit includes a pulse width modulation fade-out circuit. Specifically, Ott does not describe or suggest a refrigerator including a light electrically coupled to a processor-free light fade-out circuit, wherein the processor-free light fade-out circuit includes a pulse width modulation fade-out circuit. Rather, in contrast to the present invention, Ott describes a refrigerator door ice and fluid dispenser that includes a control circuit and a photosensitive switch configured to actuate a light bulb on or off in response to the dispenser use and presence or lack of ambient room light. For at least the above reasons, Applicants respectfully submit that Claim 1 is patentable over Ott.

Claim 14 recites "a method for de-energizing an appliance light, said method comprising providing a light bulb...providing a processor-free light fade-out circuit, wherein the processor-free light fade-out circuit comprises a pulse width modulation fade-out circuit...and electrically coupling the light bulb to the processor-free light fade-out circuit such that the appliance light is de-energized using the processor-free light fade-out circuit."

Ott does not describe or suggest a method for de-energizing an appliance light, wherein the method includes providing a light bulb, providing a processor-free light fade-out circuit, wherein the processor-free light fade-out circuit comprises a pulse width modulation fade-out circuit, and electrically coupling the light bulb to the processor-free light fade-out circuit such that the appliance light is de-energized using the processor-free light fade-out circuit. Specifically, Ott does not describe or suggest a method for de-energizing an appliance light, wherein the method includes providing processor-free light fade-out circuit, wherein the

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processor-free light fade-out circuit comprises at least one capacitor and at least one resistor, and electrically coupling the light bulb to the processor-free light fade-out circuit such that the appliance light is de-energized using the processor-free light fade-out circuit. Rather, Ott describes a refrigerator door ice and fluid dispenser that includes a control circuit and a photosensitive switch configured to actuate a light bulb on or off in response to the dispenser use and presence or lack of ambient room light. For at least the above reasons, Applicants respectfully submit that Claim 14 is patentable over Ott.

Claim 20 depends from independent Claim 15 which has been rewritten in independent form and is submitted to be in condition for allowance. When the recitations of Claim 20 are considered in combination with the recitations of Claim 15, Applicants respectfully submit that Claim 20 is likewise patentable over Ott.

For at least the reasons set forth above, Applicants respectfully request that the Section 102 rejection of Claims 1, 14, and 20 be withdrawn.

The objection to Claims 2-7 and 15-19 is respectfully traversed.

Claims 2-7 were objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but were indicated as being allowable if rewritten in independent form. Claim 2 has been rewritten in independent form. Accordingly, Claim 2 is submitted to be in condition for allowance.

Claims 3-7 depend from independent Claim 2. When the recitations of Claims 3-7 are considered in combination with the recitations of Claim 2, Applicants respectfully submit that Claims 3-7 are likewise in condition for allowance.

Claims 15-19 were objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but were indicated as being allowable if rewritten in independent form. Claim 15 has been rewritten in independent form. Accordingly, Claim 15 is submitted to be in condition for allowance.

Claims 16-19 depend from independent Claim 15. When the recitations of Claims 16-19 are considered in combination with the recitations of Claim 15, Applicants respectfully submit that Claims 16-19 are likewise in condition for allowance.

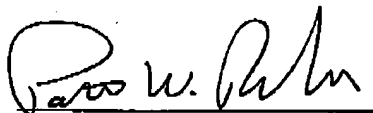
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For the reasons set forth above, Applicants request that the objection to Claims 2-7 and 15-19 be withdrawn.

In view of the foregoing remarks, all the claims now active in this application are believed to be in condition for allowance. Reconsideration and favorable action is respectfully solicited.

Respectfully Submitted,



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